

Message Text

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FM AMEMBASSY CARACAS

TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 8888

C O N F I D E N T I A L CARACAS 5513

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PLEASE PASS TO THE SECRETARY

EO 11652: GDS

TAGS: ENRG

SUBJECT: SECRETARY'S LETTER TO FOREIGN MINISTER

REF: SECTO 02017

1. I DELIVERED THE SECRETARY'S LETTER TO ESCOVAR SALOM AT BREAKFAST THIS MORNING. HE READ IT WITH CARE, SAID HE FOUND IT "POSITIVE" AND PROMISED TO RESPOND AFTER HE HAS CONSULTED WITH HIS PRESIDENT.

2. ESCOVAR TOOK PARTICULAR NOTE OF THE STATEMENT THAT THE SECRETARY'S PROPOSALS ARE NOT MEANT AS A FINAL BLUEPRINT. HE INDICATED THAT THERE WERE SOME "RESERVATIONS" ON THE PART OF PEREZ GUERRERO AND FINANCE MINISTER MURTADO WITH RESPECT TO THE APPROACH OUTLINED IN THE SECRETARY'S KANSAS CITY AND PARIS SPEECHES. NOT SURPRISINGLY, THESE HAVE TO DO WITH THE ROLE TO BE PLAYED BY THE EXISTING COMMODITY GROUPS, THE ABSENCE OF A COMMISSION ON MONETARY OR MAINTENANCE OF VALUE PROBLEMS, AND COORDINATION OR LINKAGE IN THE WORK OF THE SEPARATE COMMISSIONS. (I HAVE AN APPOINTMENT WITH PEREZ GUERRERO TOMORROW AND WILL GET A DETAILED RUNDOWN OF THAT GENTLEMAN'S VIEWS.) ESCOVAR DID EXPRESS FULL SUPPORT FOR THE PROPOSITION THAT WE DO NOT WANT TO CREATE ANOTHER UNCTAD.

3. THE MINISTER AGREED WITH MY EMPHASIS ON THE NEED FOR MEANINGFUL ADVANCE CONSULTATIONS THIS TIME AROUND. HE NOTED THE NEWS REPORTS REFLECTING AN APPARENTLY "RIGID" REACTION FROM
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THE ALGERIANS AND SAID THAT PERHAPS THE GOV COULD

BE HELPFUL WITH BOUMEDIENE. ESCOVAR THOUGHT THAT A MONTH'S TIME WOULD NOT BE SUFFICIENT TO INSURE THE SUCCESS OF A NEW PREPARATORY MEETING BUT CONCEDED THAT PERHAPS THESE MATTERS COULD BE STRAIGHTENED OUT WITHIN 60 DAYS.

4. ESCOVAR WELCOMED THE POSSIBILITY OF A VISIT BY UNDER SECRETARY ROBINSON BUT THOUGHT IT BETTER TO WAIT ON THAT UNTIL THE GOV HAS DEVELOPED ITS OWN THINKING TO A GREATER EXTENT.

5. COMMENT: I AM PERSUADED THAT THE FOREIGN MINISTER WANTS TO CONSULT CLOSELY AND TO REACH REASONABLE ACCOMMODATIONS WITH US. HOW MUCH INFLUENCE HE CAN EXERT ON INTERNAL GOV DELIBERATIONS REMAINS TO BE SEEN, HOWEVER. HE WAS QUITE FRANK IN SAYING THAT OTHER MINISTERS, AND PARTICULARLY PEREZ GUERRERO, HAD TAKEN THE LEAD IN FIXING VENEZUELA'S INTERNATIONAL ECONOMIC AND ENERGY POLICIES. ESCOVAR SEEKS TO INJECT HIMSELF AND HIS MINISTRY INTO THAT PROCESS. THE PREPCON EXERCISE WILL GIVE US A BETTER FEEL FOR HIS PROSPECTS.
SHLAUDEMAM

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